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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 001615

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STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS, SA/PAB, S/CT, EUR/RPM  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG  
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [KJUS](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: : PSA ASSESSMENT: FARYAB PREY TO WARLORDS, WEAK  
GOVERNANCE

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES RICHARD NORLAND FOR REASONS  
1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Afghan and senior international leaders assess that the roots of conflict in Faryab province stem both from the rivalry between the two factions of Junbesh and Azadi, and from the weak governance that allows those private militias to operate. In a recent Provincial Security Assessment (PSA) meeting on Faryab, National Security Advisor Rassoul tasked the group of Afghan and international participants to consider three lines of action: changing elements of the provincial leadership, putting an end to the factional power struggle, and strengthening the Afghan National Security Forces in the province. At the end of the meeting he thanked the international participants for their contribution and said the Afghan side would meet separately to devise a plan. Both the tenor of the meeting and the GOA ownership of the decision-making process show how the PSA has matured from its halting beginnings into an Afghan-led, results-oriented program. We hope that it will lead to real changes in Faryab province, and in other provinces under consideration. End summary.

¶2. (C) The Provincial Security Assessment meeting held April 8 reviewed the political and security situation in Faryab province. NSA Rassoul chaired the meeting; the Afghan side included Interior Minister Zarar Moqbil, National Directorate of Security Director Saleh, Ministry of Defense Director of Operations Lieutenant General Karimi, and for the first part of the meeting Faryab

Governor Latif Ibrahimi. International participation included senior representatives from Embassy, CFC-A, ISAF, and UNAMA.

13. (C) The various presentations had several common themes. The two critical issues in the province are the power struggle between the two factions/parties of Junbesh (led by Abdul Rashid Dostum) and Azadi (led by Malik Pahlawan). As Minister Zarar noted, both parties want to increase their influence, and both have been able to keep their weapons and militia forces. NDS Chief Saleh remarked - before Zarar arrived - that while 200 additional police had been deployed to the area in the hope that they would separate and disarm the factions, they have been ineffective. Zarar in his own presentation claimed that 80 percent of the police force is qualified and professional but the patrolmen lack sufficient weapons and ammunition to carry out their duties. LTG Karimi reported that in response to an Afghan NSC request, the ANA has sent a company of 116 personnel to Faryab, based in Pashtunkot, to improve security. ISAF MG Lane said that ISAF's assessment supported the above analysis, but added that the two factions are also fighting for control over smuggling routes, and they have been fueled by feuding at the local level among sub-commanders trying to gain power.

14. (C) Governor Ibrahimi pointed out underlying problems that exacerbated the rivalry between the Junbesh and Azadi, including the fact that the

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province is mountainous and poor with massive unemployment and very little reconstruction investment. He argued that the ANP are weak and their numbers remain inadequate. Moreover, he commented on the scarcity of qualified professional police officers, as well as the lack of weapons, ammunition, clothing, fuel, and even food for ANP patrolmen. He said that if district leaders, both administrators and police chiefs, were to be transferred, they needed to be replaced from people outside the area - otherwise they would be caught up in the factional strife. He highlighted the importance of the DIAG process in Faryab, saying the central government needed to put direct pressure on both Dostum and Malik to disband their groups. He defended the provincial authorities by saying they have already arrested one notorious commander, Nadir, and are trying to detain another, Rehmatullah Rais. (Comment: Nadir is an Azadi commander while Rehmatullah is Junbesh - the arrest of only Nadir supports the claim that the governor favors Junbesh. End comment.)

Lines of Action  
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15. (C) At this point, Dr. Rassoul thanked the governor and then asked him to leave the meeting. He told the remaining participants that he did this because in Faryab, weak governance is part of the problem and needed to be discussed openly without the governor's presence. He pointed out that Faryab is the only place left where warlords are challenging the authority of the state and are essentially running a parallel government. Rassoul specified three lines of action:

1) Governance. The meeting representatives came to general agreement that the Deputy Governor, Sayed Ahmed Sayed should be replaced. UNAMA DSRSG Alexander also proposed the removal of the Chief of the Border Police, and that was agreed by the group.

There was discussion of whether the Governor should also be replaced; while he is certainly weak, doesn't follow through with initiatives, and openly favors Junbesh, removing him could destabilize the province by causing a reaction from Dostum's supporters, especially the violent Junbesh Youth (who had been behind the attack on the PRT last month). Rassoul said the Afghan side would have an internal meeting on this question and present their decision to the PSA at its next meeting.

2) Junbesh-Azadi. Rassoul said that the GOA would put heavy pressure on both Dostum and Malik and urged the international community to do the same. All agreed that the DIAG process was critical for success. DSRSG Alexander commented that any action needed to include a justice element. Arguing that Faryab had previously been quite successful but was now sliding relatively quickly into a dangerous situation, he said this was in large part because those who have challenged government authority have not suffered for it. There have not been any consequences for clear crimes committed, he said, including not only the attack on the PRT, which

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resulted in several deaths, but also recent murders in several districts and the still-outstanding cases of murder, theft, and rape committed by Azadi commander Gul Muhammed Pahlewan. The criminals, including also Junbesh commander Rahmatullah Rais, must be brought to justice.

3) Strengthening ANSF. DCM pointed out that any plan to disband the armed groups in Faryab would require strengthening the security forces there. Rassoul agreed, saying that ANA and/or ANP would need to be reinforced. LTG Karimi requested the support of the ISAF PRT for the ANA in terms of training, logistics, and air lift. He said without PRT support it would be difficult to keep the ANA there over the full year. Karimi added that as the ANA continued to increase in numbers, it would probably be possible to increase the number of personnel deployed to Faryab. At present, he noted, one ANA brigade is scattered over nine northern provinces.

Comment  
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16. (C) This meeting shows how the PSA concept has matured since its inception last winter. The meeting was focused and constructive, with Dr. Rassoul presenting a practical list of action items, soliciting discussion, and then calling an internal follow-on meeting for the Afghan participants to make their own decisions as to the best way ahead. Faryab remains one of the last provinces to be plagued with the kind of warlordism that was rife here a few years ago - indeed not much has changed there since DCM visited Maimana in 2002. Since the issues of factionalism and weak governance are clearly a GOA lead, the international community will wait to see what decisions are made. We will then support through the PRT and other means available, such as DIAG.  
Norland